

WisDems: Why won't Walker answer for the new Lincoln Hills report?

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It's been three days since WSAW reported that Scott Walker not only knew about the Lincoln Hills crisis years earlier than he claims, but he also cancelled an independent review of the facilities just days before the scandal went public. News of the report is spreading:

Associated Press: Walker administration canceled request for prison probe

A television station is reporting Gov. Scott Walker's administration told former prisons Secretary Ed Wall to cancel his request for an association to investigate abuse at Wisconsin's youth prison...The association's former executive director said shortly after receiving the letter Wall told him that Walker's staff had instructed Wall to cancel the review request. Wall says the letter proves Walker knew about problems at the prison long before they admitted them publicly.

WBAY Report:

Governor Scott Walker's administration reportedly asked an investigation into abuse at the state's youth prison be canceled. According to our Wausau television station partner WSAW, former prisons Secretary Ed Wall wrote a letter in November of 2015 to the Association of State Correctional Administrators asking for a review of Lincoln Hills. Two days later, Governor Walker called for Wall to take quote "aggressive action" about the prison's problems. The association's former director says shortly after receiving Wall's letter, Wall called saying Governor Walker's staff instructed

him to cancel the review. Staff reportedly refused to make the governor available for interviews about the matter.

Wisconsin Gazette: Former prisons secretary says Walker ordered cancellation of his request for investigation of youth prisons

But what's almost as troubling as the actual scandal is Walker's total refusal to provide answers to the public. Over the last several weeks, Walker and the Wisconsin Republican Party refused to respond to WSAW's repeated requests for an interview:

Gov. Scott Walker repeatedly declined to talk on camera about any of Wall's claims. At a stop in Wausau in the last two weeks, 7 investigates asked Walker again if he would accept an interview and explain why he had continued to decline. Walker said his staff had not told him about our request. However, he did not follow up on our question about granting an interview.

Avoidance has been Walker's MO since the problems started. The governor was criticized by fellow Republicans earlier this year for saying he saw "no value" in visiting a state prison.

"We know Scott Walker tried to keep the Lincoln Hills crisis under wraps, but even now that he's been exposed, he still won't give the public the answers they deserve," said DPW spokesperson Alex Japko. "Walker's clearly more interested with preserving his public image than addressing the problems he has repeatedly ignored."